

MOURAD EFFENDI.

BY PERKINAX.

Mourad Effendi did not obey the Koran's precepts, and did to Allah pray that strife amongst faithful Muslims would cease. That no man should be recent to his trust, and that the Koran's call low in the dust, and that the tribe of faithful would increase.

He was a farmer in Roumania's plain. He mourned a son, a sire, and brother slain. And always looked with faith on earth and sun. When his own grief was heavy in his breast, He always had kind words for the oppressed, And never ceased to pray "God's will be done."

Mourad was old—some seventy years had sped Since first the sun had shone upon his head; His wives were three, his children were three score.

His sons were soldiers, and were in that fight Decreed by the great Sultan to be right— Loyal and brave the Turkish arms they bore.

Then came the news from Plevna's battlefield How many Turkish warriors had to yield. The men from Moscow had the battle won; The blood of Turkish chivalry was spilled. Mourad's six sons were in that battle killed; The weeping father said, "God's will be done."

Mourad went home hoping the news untrue; Prayed unto heaven, then read the Koran through.

Retired, and dreamed of cruel Plevna's fight. He saw his sons all armed for that battle right. Their swords were bright, their step and language gay. As men who know they are in the right.

The morning sun that shone on Mourad's head Confirmed the news that his six sons were dead.

Mourad does nothing now but weep and pray; He anxious waits that long-promised day; He hopes that war will then forever cease, Why should the sons of men each other slay?

Join me the Turk and to his prayer give scope; Unto mankind hold out that blessed hope. That war and all its evils shall be done, And let us hope that all our future days Shall live in them nothing but cause for praise.

May in this world be universal peace.—*American Commercial Traveler.*

THE TWO ROADS IN LIFE.

BY JAMES FRANKLIN FITTS.

HEN, about fifty years ago, Mr. Otis Kinsman left his home in Albany for a business journey in the West, the undertaking was a very different thing from our Western trips of to-day. The region of the Mississippi was then the "far West"; there were very few railroads, and it required not many days to bring the traveler beyond the bounds of canal, stage, and lake transportation, to a point where he must needs prosecute his further journeying on horseback. To be exact, however, we must say that when Mr. Kinsman purchased a horse and an equestrian outfit, at a town near the west end of Lake Erie, he had not quite passed beyond the region of stage-coaches. From that place to a village forty miles distant, which we will call Sunderland, there was a kind of stage route, but the advice of good people at the town on the lake determined the traveler not to patronize it.

"The coach makes one trip a week each way," he was told, "and don't leave here next till day after to-morrow. It starts long before daylight, and gets in long after dark. Once I never got there till after midnight—fact, it's a corduroy road with holes in places deep enough to hide a wheel. And then—"

"Thank you," interrupted Mr. Kinsman, was the sudden interruption.

"Don't worry me in that way, Samson! Did I not try my best to save you, before you utterly went to the bad? After you had sent your wife broken-hearted to the grave, did I give you up? When the story of the robbery came out, which naturally turned the few against you who were still your friends, you know how I clung to you, and how hard I tried to save you from State's prison. And when your punishment was ended, and when you offered to go into his employ, and help you to fight the hard battle to gain honor and respect?"

"It was hopeless," said the sulky Larrabee.

"It was not hopeless!" The fine features of the speaker lighted up with enthusiasm, and his face became radiant. "The fight could have been won—and it shall be now, if you will give heed to me. My errand here will take me almost to the Mississippi, where I go to purchase a very desirable tract of wild land. On my return I will stop here, and you shall go back with me. I have work for you to do; I remember your ability in business before you threw yourself away. Abandon these degrading associates; close your disreputable business; trust to me, and I pledge you my word."

The speaker stopped abruptly; an ashen pallor overspread his face, and he sank back upon the bed. Larrabee sprang up, seized the water jug, and dashed part of its contents into the sufferer's face. Observing that it produced a reviving effect, he proceeded to loosen the vest, and, as he did so, he observed between it and the shirt a stout woven belt, such as was used at that day to carry money. He felt with his thumb and finger at the edges, and found it alternately hard and soft in places, as though it contained both gold-pieces and bank notes.

Presently Mr. Kinsman opened his eyes, came back to consciousness, and sat up. He smiled as he saw the landlord standing before him with the water-jug in his hand.

"Thank you, Samson," he said. "I'm nearly right again; you did the correct thing. You never knew that I was subject to such attacks, although I began to feel them long before you went away. Partial failure of the heart, the doctors say, caused by excitement. I must be careful. There's something more I wish to say, but it's better not to say it now. Think earnestly of what I have said, and in the morning we will talk again on this subject."

So they parted for the night.

Samson Larrabee was up betimes the next morning. He swept the bar and the hall, and gave directions that a good breakfast should be prepared for the guest. He amazed one of his boon companions of the previous night, when he came in and asked for a dram, by telling him sharply to go about his business. He was strangely restless. He strolled about; he sat down and tried to read; once he went out to the front of the house, and looked up at the window of the room where the guest slept. Finally he told the kitchen girl to go up and knock at the door of the chamber and say that breakfast would soon be ready.

The girl went up, and in a few moments returned with the report that she could get no answer from the room.

Then Larrabee went up. The girl, apprehensive of something wrong, had lingered on the stairs. The white face and tottering step of her master as he came down scared her.

"What's wrong with the gentleman, sir?" she asked. "Is he sick?"

"He is dead," said Larrabee, huskily.

The village where these events occurred, although having its full proportion of the lawless and the vicious, was yet under the control of law and order; and a thorough and searching investigation followed. Because of the bad character of Larrabee and his surroundings, it was prosecuted with an expectation of establishing his guilt;



"Can you take care of me and my horse to-night?"

"The inducements are very strong not to go in this way. I think I will begin my horseback experience here."

He found the road almost as bad as it had been described to him, and although a horseman can get along much better on a poor highway than can a vehicle, it was near ten o'clock at night when he rode into Sunderland. Had not the distance he had ridden, and the time it had required, persuaded him that he must be at the end of his weary day's journey, he might have doubted the fact. Lately as it was, there was a moon which showed him a settlement of scattered buildings, put up with little care in the arrangement of streets, and looking not at all like the thrifty and well-ordered village near his Eastern home. But everything yields to hunger and fatigue, and he was not just then disposed to be critical. His friend at the lake town, who treated everything in that new country as the proper subject of a joke, had told him that there were two taverns in Sunderland, both of which were about as bad as they could be.

"But which is the best?" Mr. Kinsman asked.

"Well, sir, there ain't any best. Go to either of 'em, and you'll wish you'd gone to the other."

With this information, our traveler did not think it necessary to spend any time in examining and choosing. He stopped at a large frame house before which a round wagon in a frame on a high post swung and creaked in the wind, and shouted a loud "Hillo!" The door opened, and from a lighted room a man appeared in the doorway.

"Can you take care of me and my horse to-night?" the traveler asked.

"I suppose so. Here, Sam; take the animal. Come this way, sir. We can't do very well by you—travel in small, and times hard. Sam, tell some of those lazy women to get the gentleman something to eat."

The room into which the landlord conducted his guest was the bar-room; and to a man of Mr. Kinsman's refined taste and correct principles it presented a repulsive scene. It was cluttered with strong tobacco; glasses and decanters filled the shelves behind the counters. At each of two tables in the middle of the floor sat four men, the landlord being one of the number, deeply engaged in playing cards by the light of tallow candles. Small piles of silver money on the tables showed that they were gambling. The faces of all were inflamed with drink, and occasionally a half-suppressed oath was heard. So it appeared

was all this to the guest that, after taking in the whole scene, he was about to request that his horse be brought round, and to seek other quarters, when a movement of the landlord brought his face fully into the light. Mr. Kinsman's attention was immediately arrested by it. He looked long and carefully, and reconsidered his intention. When supper was announced he followed the woman into the next room, and after satisfying his hunger, returned to the bar-room. The clock struck eleven, when the landlord threw down his cards and declared there should be no more playing to-night. He had seemed to Mr. Kinsman to be laboring under a sense of the bad impression that the surroundings would make upon his guest; and when some of the players demurred at quitting so soon, he grew emphatic and peremptory, extinguished all the candles but one, and bade them begone. When he was alone with the traveler, he began a half-apology; but the latter soon interrupted him.

"All this speaks for itself, Samson Larrabee," he said. "I am glad to meet you again, but very sorry to find you as I do. You have grown no better in twenty years."

The landlord started back with astonishment.

"Why—why, my name isn't Larrabee!" he said.

"Then you have taken another," said the traveler, quietly. The other stared at him, and then cried out:

"Indeed, I am; and here's my hand, Samson."

The landlord slowly held out his own. He did not seem well pleased that he had been recognized, and he did not for a moment answer the cheery salutation. Then he said:

"Well, Otis, you've found me, and you'll be welcome to the poor entertainment I can give you; but I'll have you know at the start that I won't submit to any of your sermons. Do you want to go to bed?"

Mr. Kinsman looked very sorrowfully into the face before him, disheveled and with a look of bad passions, and simply bowed. The landlord took a candle and he followed him up stairs to a meanly furnished chamber. With a muttered good-night, Larrabee was about to go, when the other's hand was laid on his shoulder.

"Wait, Samson," he said; "there's something I must say."

"Oh, please!" was the impatient answer. The hand detained him, kindly but firmly.

"I have a right to speak," continued Mr. Kinsman. "Was I not your friend when you had very few friends? Did I not try my best to save you from yourself? Remember our boyhood, Samson, and now we were sent-mates at school. I say I have a right to speak to you."

Larrabee took the only chair in the room, thrust his hands in his pocket and his feet out in front, and uttered a dogged "Well?"

"My own life has been a happy and prosperous one since you last saw me," pursued Mr. Kinsman. "I have a beloved family. I have gained a competence; I believe that I have the respect and confidence of my fellow-citizens. I do not say these things boastfully; when I thank God every night that they are as they are, I also pray not to be led into temptation. It is my responsibility to Him and to you that I speak to you now. I could not kneel to-night in entreaty for myself and for those I have left at home, did I fail to meet the duty that is thrust upon me this night. I say to you, Samson Larrabee, that all that I am you might have been had you not hardened your heart against the appeals of your best friend and persisted in your evil courses. You—"

"Mighty few 'best friends' there were," was the sudden interruption.

"Don't worry me in that way, Samson! Did I not try my best to save you, before you utterly went to the bad? After you had sent your wife broken-hearted to the grave, did I give you up? When the story of the robbery came out, which naturally turned the few against you who were still your friends, you know how I clung to you, and how hard I tried to save you from State's prison. And when your punishment was ended, and when you offered to go into his employ, and help you to fight the hard battle to gain honor and respect?"

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but it resulted in his complete vindication. A post-mortem examination disclosed such a condition of the heart of the deceased that the doctors declared that, in connection with the absence of any external marks of violence, and any other apparent cause, there could be no doubt that death had resulted naturally from organic failure. The money-belt, containing a very large sum, was found upon the body. Samson Larrabee detailed to the Coroner's jury with exactness all the incidents of Mr. Kinsman's stay at his house that have been set down in these columns, and more of which he said was corroborated by others. The verdict was in accordance with these facts. It should be added that sorrowing members of the family who shortly came on from the East to claim the remains, fully concurred in this verdict.

People at Sunderland who had been disaffected with this result on account of their feeling against Larrabee, arising out of his vicious life, were soon convinced by the conduct of the man himself that they did him injustice. He was, literally and emphatically, a changed man. The profound sorrow which he exhibited upon the sudden and startling death of Mr. Kinsman could not possibly be feigned. His testimony at the inquest, while given in such a way as to produce a decided impression of its truth, was frequently interrupted by his great emotion. From that day he quit his bad associates, discontinued his business, and turned to hard and honest toil. As the place grew in population and importance, the better man within Samson Larrabee grew with it. And his fortunes flourished in due proportion. He occupied a large and public honors; he reared a family in virtue and usefulness; there was not a measure for the public improvement, charitable, religious, or educational, that did not find in him a powerful supporter. His life was prolonged beyond the period of three-score and ten; and it is the simple truth to say that he died lamented by all who knew him or knew of him.

While the belief remained unshaken that no crime was committed upon that memorable night at Larrabee's inn, yet, in the minds of those who knew the depravity of the landlord's character before that time, there was a feeling that the whole truth had not been told. The sudden and astonishing change effected in that character seemed to them not explained by anything that had been told. As time went on, and the occurrences here related faded from the recollection of men, a few of the older residents of the place were accustomed to get together, and in reviewing the strange and notable things that had occurred since the settlement of their village, to declare that there was, after all, a mystery about the Kinsman affair.

They were right, although they were not permitted in time to know its solution. But a few years have elapsed since a very aged clergyman, once settled in Sunderland, died in a city far beyond the Mississippi. The human heart and conscience are not made for secrecy; they must confide their sorrows and burdens to other sympathetic hearts; and to this good and reverend man did Samson Larrabee unbosom his secret in the days of his new and better life. The substance of what he said will conclude this history.

The frame of mind and temper in which Mr. Kinsman found his wayward schoolmate that evening was not such as to help the earnest appeals which the good man made to him to leave the career of crime, and to turn to a life of industry and better life. The substance of what he said will conclude this history.

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